Prices of edible oil

†2072. SHRI D. P. YADAV: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the prices of the edible oil are being charged arbitrarily by traders in the domestic market due to increase in the import duty on the edible oil;

(b) whether in view of the fact that edible oil is the need of common man, the undue price hike of edible oil is additional financial burden on the common people; and

(c) if so, the action being taken by the Department to prevent the price hike of the same?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI V. SREENIVASA PRASAD): (a) and (b) The retail prices of Groundnut Oil and Mustard Oil, the two most important oils, which set the price trend for other oils as also of vanaspati are given below:—

Rs. per Kg.

	Commodity	Retail prices on 9.6.2000	Retail prices on 3.8.2000
1.	Groundnut Oil (Mumbai)	38	42
2.	Mustard Oil (Delhi)	42	41
3.	Vanaspati (Delhi)	34	35

It may be observed that there is no significant increase in the retail prices of edible oils, after the increase of customs duty on edible oils with effect from 12.6.2000.

(c) The price situation of edible oils in the country is being regularly monitored by the High Powered Price Monitoring Board (HPPMB) headed by the Cabinet Secretary.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

State Governments are also being requested to maintain constant vigil on the availability and prices of edible oil.

Number of PDS shops

2073. SHRI S. RAMACHANDRAN PILLAI: Will the Minister of COUNSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) total number of PDS shops in the country;

(b) the ratio of villages covered by the PDS;

(c) number of commodities supplied through the PDS and the names of those commodities;

(d) whether Government had made any physical verificaiton so as to ascertain the actual supply of all items in PDS shops; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SRIRAM CHAUHAN): (a) and (b) As per reports received from State Governments/UT Administrations there are 460110 fair price shops (FPS) in the country out of which 368417 are in rural areas and 91693 are in urban areas. Decision regarding opening and closing of fair price shops is taken by the State Government/UT Administration concerned depending upon the local requirement and viability of fair price shops. The State Governments have been advised to have a norm of one FPS for every 2000 persons and to ensure that no consumer/card holder has to travel more than 3 km. to reach his FPS.

(c) to (e) PDS is operated under the joint responsibility of Government of India and the State Governments/UT Administrations. While the Central Government is responsible for procuring and making available to the States the PDS commodities up to the designated depots, the responsibility of distribution to the cardholders through the network of Fair Prices Shops rests with the State Governments. At present, five key essential commodities *viz.*, Rice, Wheat, Sugar, Edible Oil and Kerosene Oil are being supplied by the Central Government through PDS. State Governments have been advised to include additional items of daily use under PDS